Associated Press

Supporters of the George Wallace presidential campaign opened convention in Dallas yesterday to form a permanent political party. From left are Jim Johnson, Little Rock, Ark., former Democratic candidate for governor and senator; Jim Estomo, party secretary; Bob Walters, Wallace's California campaign manager; Bard Logan, San Antonio, head of Texas Wallace group; and Kent Courtney, New Orleans, chairman of the Conservative Society of America.

Wallace Party Looks to Future, Seeks Support of Congressmen

DALLAS, Feb. 1 (UPI)—George C. Wallace's American Independen Party, meeting for the first time since the presidential election, will aim its political power toward "friendly or hostile" Congressmen and will rebuild "right down to the grassroots," a Party official said today.

But Bob Walters, a member of the AIP national advisers committee, said the Party would be in trouble if Wallace himself did not run for the White House again in 1972.

Walters said the Party would begin immediately a personal tour of Congress to scout out support.

He said the Party already has three tentative commitments from elected Congressmen to change their party affiliation from Democratic or Republican to the new party.

"We have three tentative and are working on 16 more," said Walters. He would not name the Congressmen, but said "most are in the House and are Democrats from the South."

Walters, of Los Angeles, spoke at a news conference prior to the opening session of the two-day convention of the Association of Wallace Voters, a loose gathering of about 45 state affiliations which are tied together by common support for Wallace.

Walters said the former Alabama governor, presidential candadate in November, already was running for the AIP's 1972 nomination and it likely would go to him.

"The Party would probably have a severe problem if Mr. Wallace decided not to be a candidate in 1972," Walters said.